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## AMERICAN MORNING WITH PAULA ZAHN

### Congressman Tom Lantos, Former Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy Discuss Peace for Middle East

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PAULA ZAHN, CNN ANCHOR: The big question this hour, why is Saudi buying TV ads in the U.S.? Well, the Saudi embassy in Washington has sponsored a multimillion dollar media blitz trying to emphasize the U.S.-Saudi connection.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We've been allies for more than 60 years, working together to solve the world's toughest problems, working together for world prosperity, working together to bring peace to the Middle East, working together to create a better future for us all.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

ZAHN: The TV ads were timed to coincide with the Saudi crown prince's visit to Texas last week.

And joining us now with their view of the Saudi spin from Washington, California Congressman Tom Lantos and Richard Murphy, former U.S. assistant secretary of state, now with the Council on Foreign Relations.

Welcome back to both of you. Happy Monday morning.

REP. TOM LANTOS (D), CALIFORNIA: Good to be with you.

ZAHN: Thank you.

All right, Mr. Murphy, I'm going to start with you this morning. I wanted to read for you what one man wrote about this latest ad campaign, Jack Spencer of the Heritage Foundation. He says, and referring to them as the Saudis, "They are trying to win the support of

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the American public and to frame the argument. The American public is not dumb. Whenever Saudi Arabia holds a telethon to give money to the families of the victims of terrorism, we know they are giving money to terrorists. We know it is blood money."

How effective do you think this campaign will really be given the depth of feeling about Saudi Arabia?

RICHARD MURPHY, FORMER U.S. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE: Well, Paula, I think the Saudis, recognizing the very rough time they had after September 11 in our media, comments by some of our political leaders, decided that it was time to come back with a campaign. I don't find the ads surprising at all. And as far as recounting 60 years of cooperation, we've had that. So those are facts.

ZAHN: Tom Lantos, your reaction to the campaign?

LANTOS: Well, they're anything but facts and Dick Murphy knows better. The notion that we have been allies for 60 years is an absurdity. We have been protecting the Saudi regime, which is an repressive regime living in the Middle Ages. We just had this example of the air traffic controllers upsurge, that women air traffic controllers cannot handle a Saudi plane.

Their values, their policies, their attitudes are diametrically opposed to ours. They have oil, we need that oil and that's why we protect them. That's the basis of the relationship. Their society is diametrically opposed in values to our society. They have no religious freedom. They have no rights for women. They have no political pluralism. So for Dick Murphy to sit there and say we share the same values I think is absurd.

This is a very clever P.R. trick and they are pouring millions of dollars into it. I wish they had poured this money into Arab refugee camps. We wouldn't have the problem that we have today.

ZAHN: All right, Richard, now is your chance to react to some of what Representative Lantos has just said.

MURPHY: I always enjoy reacting to Rep. Lantos, an old friend from the days when I used to testify to the committee in the House.

LANTOS: It's good to see you, Dick.

MURPHY: The same here.

Tom, I don't think you heard me use the word "allies." I said we have been working together. We have a common interest. Yes, oil is primary. Military cooperation over the years has been very important to us. We had the use of their facilities in, during the Iran-Iraq war.

We sent our AWACs to, yes, to protect their eastern province against potential Iranian attacks and they gave us the facilities to help them, certainly to help them, but to help keep that area, get a measure of stability during the campaign against Saddam Hussein.

So I speak of mutual interests, Tom...

LANTOS: I think if...

MURPHY: I don't speak of mutual values.

LANTOS: Well, if I may ask you to look at that ad again, the ad talks about we have been allies for 60 years. We have not been allies for 60 years...

MURPHY: We have cooperated for 60 years, Tom.

LANTOS: We have been protecting the Saudis for 60 years, that is true.

MURPHY: In our interests.

LANTOS: And there is one fundamental issue. As long as the Saudis continue to support these horrendous schools teaching hatred and venom, as they are, as long as their media are determined to provide hatred, antagonism, hostility, the glorification of suicide bombers, there is very little we can do to bring about anything constructive there.

The Saudis at long last have to recognize that the time of their values is now over. The world has become aware of what this Islamic fundamentalism, militant fundamentalism means. It is trying to destroy free and open and democratic societies.

ZAHN: All right...

LANTOS: We saw it in New York. The bulk of the people involved were Saudis. The money was Saudi. Osama bin Laden was financing this with Saudi money.

The time is long past to sweep this under the rug.

ZAHN: All right, Mr. Murphy...

LANTOS: We should face up to the facts.

ZAHN: ... I want you to react to what, the final thought of Representative Lantos. But before I do that, I want to put up on the screen something one of your colleagues has said on the Council on Foreign Relations. This comes from Warren Bass. And he says, "I

think what Saudi has a problem with is exporting suicide terrorists. If 15 of the 19 hijackers hadn't been Saudis, they wouldn't feel any embarrassment. What they really should do is concentrate on the extremism that is being taught in Saudi Arabia" -- something Mr. Lantos just referred to -- "and the country's role in setting up conditions that help plant the seeds of terror."

Are you confident, Richard, that Saudi Arabia will do that?

MURPHY: I am confident, Paula, for this very simple reason. They were the target every bit as much as we were the target September 11. The game of Osama bin Laden was to drive the United States out of the Arabian Peninsula so that under his assumption, and perhaps Tom shares this in part, we are the only reason that keeps Saudi Arabia going. And if we weren't there, they would fall like a ripe fruit into the hands of those very fundamentalists, those militants that he so deplores and that we all deplore. They are the target...

ZAHN: But...

LANTOS: The system has to open up.

ZAHN: But do you acknowledge the extremism, though, Richard Murphy, do you acknowledge the extremism that Tom Lantos has just pointed out in the Saudi Arabian culture? MURPHY: They have a very narrow and even rigid interpretation, practice of Islam. The Wahabi doctrines or practice, they do, they are convinced they have the way in Islam and that others are not as pure and as observant as they are.

Within Saudi Arabia they also have a ministry of education that has surrounded the religious teachings with other subjects, the history, the geography and all. When that has been exported with Saudi money, however, to very poor societies like Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia, then you have graduates who know only rote memorization of the sayings of the Prophet and certain interpretations of the Koran, which has made them good recruits, easy recruits for the jihad, for the so-called holy wars such as Osama bin Laden has preached.

ZAHN: All right, gentlemen, Representative Tom Lantos, Richard Murphy, glad to see the two of you.

Boy, would I have loved to have attended some of those meetings where the two of you had to testify before each other. It must have been interesting.

LANTOS: We'd be happy to have you.


ZAHN: Some real fireworks, I would imagine.

All right, thanks, gentlemen. Have a good day.

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